ASAKAWA, I THINK THAT MOMENTARY BLACKNESS IS SOMEBODY *BLINKING.*

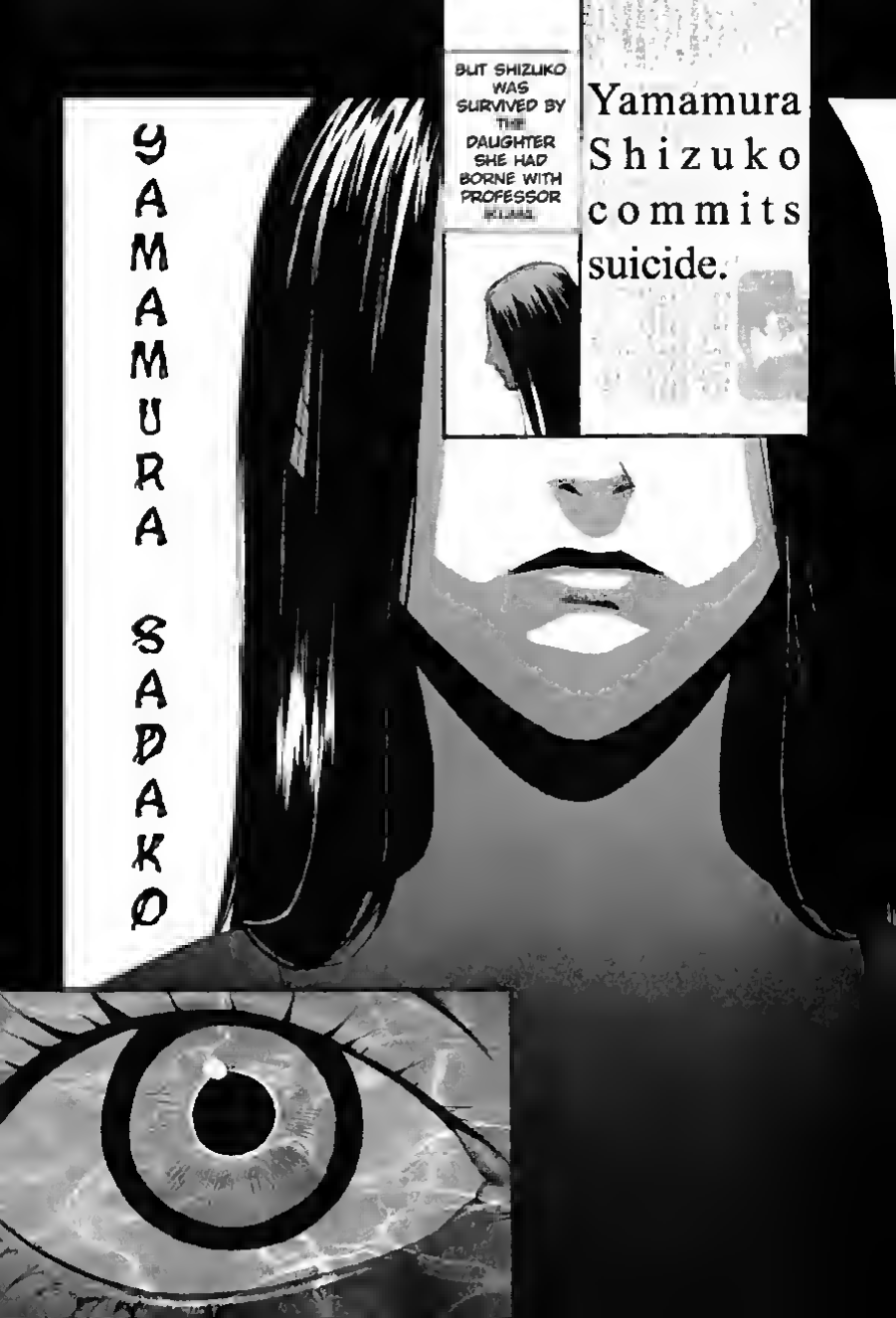
BASED ON THIS, THE TWO CONCLUDED THAT THE IMAGES ON THE VIDEOTAPE WERE THE PRODUCT OF NENSHA - THE FOCUSING OF WILL ON FILM OR OTHER MEDIUM TO PRODUCE A PSYCHIC IMAGE- BY SOME AS-YET UNIDENTIFIED INDIVIDUAL.

SHOUMON: PLAYING IN THE WATER.

BOUKON: MONSTER.

THE DIALECT WAS IDENTIFIED AS BELONGING TO THE SASHIKIJI REGION OF OSHIMA ISLAND, LOCATED IN IZU PREFECTURE. THUS, THE TWO CONCENTRATED THEIR SEARCH ON THAT REGION, FINALLY TURNING UP THE NAME "YAMAMURA SHIZUKO," AN OSHIMA NATIVE WHOSE PSYCHIC PROWESS HAD AT ONE TIME GIVEN HER A MEASURE OF NOTORIETY.

SHOUMON BAKKARI, BOUKON GA KURU ZO


YAMAMURA SADAKO
BUT SHIZUKO WAS SURVIVED BY THE DAUGHTER SHE HAD BORNE WITH PROFESSOR ICHIRO.
Yamamura Shizuko commits suicide.

SADAKO POSSESSED POWERS FAR AND ABOVE THOSE OF HER MOTHER.
SHE REMAINED ON OSHIMA ISLAND UNTIL GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, AFTER WHICH SHE MOVED TO TOKYO AND JOINED THE HISHO ACTING TROUPE.
SHORTLY THEREAFTER, HOWEVER, SADAKO LEFT THE TROUPE, AT WHICH POINT SHE SIMPLY VANISHED WITHOUT A TRACE. RYUJI AND ASAKAWA'S INVESTIGATION HAD HIT A DEAD END.
IT WAS, PREDICTABLY, THE KEENLY ANALYTICAL RYUJI FOR WHOM INSPIRATION SUDDENLY STRUCK.
WHY ARE WE WASTING TIME TRYING TO PUT TOGETHER SADAKO'S PAST, WHEN WHAT WE OUGHT TO BE CONCENTRATING ON IS THE TRANSMISSION?

ASAKAWA AND RYUJI DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER BY ENLISTING THE HELP OF ONE NAGAO JOUTAROU, CURRENTLY A PEDIATRICIAN.
AS IT TURNS OUT, THE CABINS STOOD ON THE SITE OF THE OLD SANITORIUM OF SOUTHERN HANOMI.
THE IMAGES FIRST SHOWED UP IN IZU, AT THE RENTAL CABINS. WHY?
THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD BE INVESTIGATING-- THE AREA'S HISTORY.
AH!
WHOM WAS EMPLOYED AT THE SANITORIUM FROM THE YEARS OF 1962 TO 1967.
WITH A SHOCK, BOTH RYUJI AND ASAKAWA REALIZE THAT THEY KNOW THIS MAN - HIS WAS THE FACE THAT APPEARED ON THE VIDEOTAPE.

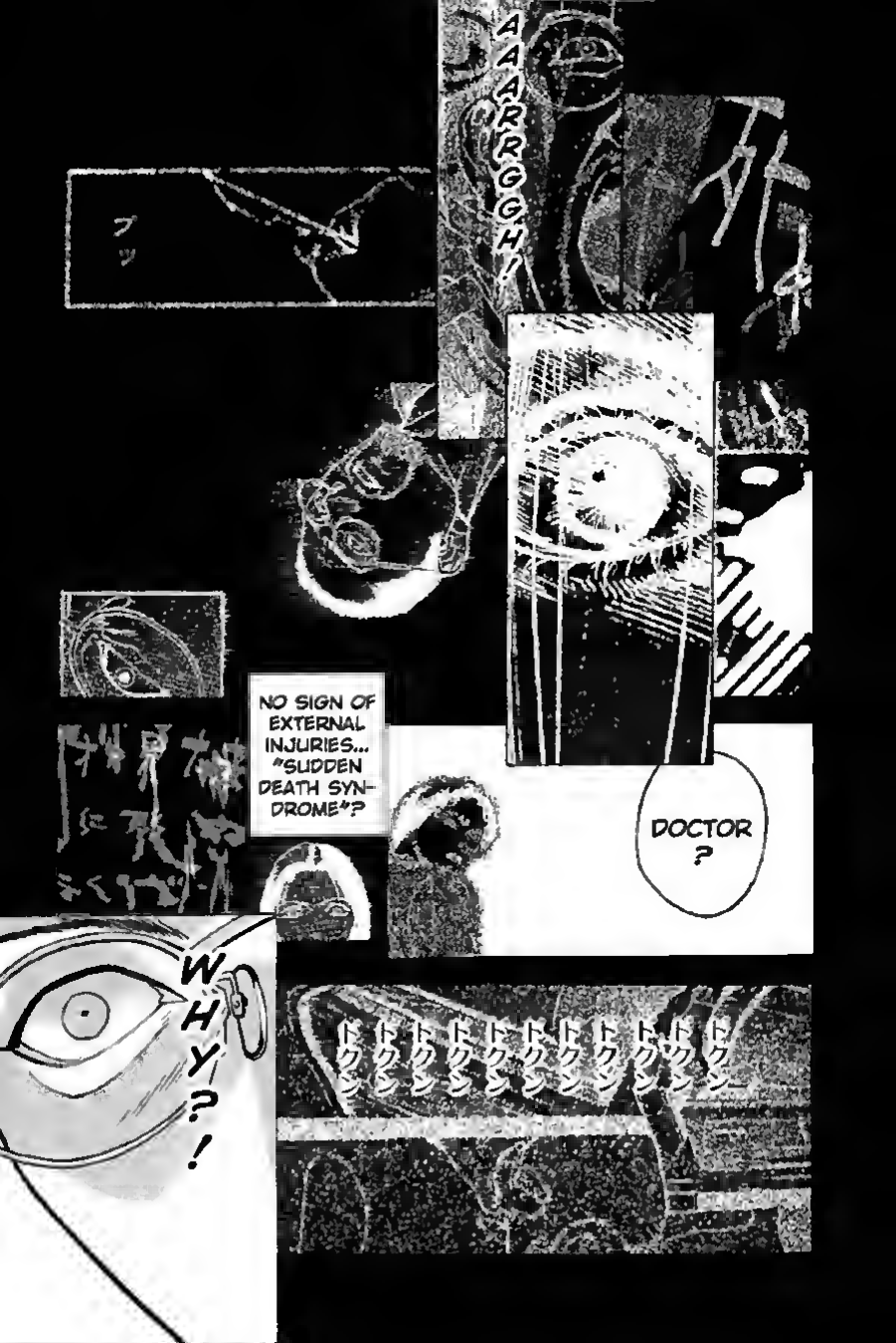
AT FIRST PROCLAIMING IGNORANCE, NAGAO FINALLY BUCKLES UNDER RYUJI'S QUESTIONING.
THE DOCTOR RELATES HOW HE ENCOUNTERED SADAKO AT THE SANITORIUM, WHERE HE WAS BEING TREATED FOR A SMALLPOX INFECTION. DESIRE FOR HER CONSUMED HIM, UNTIL AT LAST ONE DAY HE FORCED HIMSELF UPON HER, RAPING HER.
IT WASN'T UNTIL AFTERWARD THAT NAGAO REALIZED HER ANOMALOUS PHYSICAL MAKEUP-- DUE TO A CONDITION KNOWN AS TESTICULAR FEMINIZATION SYNDROME, SADAKO POSSESSED BOTH MALE AND FEMALE GENITALIA. FURTHERMORE, THOUGH OUTWARDLY APPEARING ENTIRELY FEMALE, SADAKO'S XY CHROMOSOMAL MAKEUP IN FACT CLASSIFIED HER AS *MALE*.

SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO BEAR CHIL-DREN.
AFTER RAPING HER, NAGAO STRANGLED SADAKO AND TOSSED HER BODY INTO A NEARBY WELL.

IF THE CURSE OF THE VIDEOTAPE WAS IN FACT TRUE, ASAKAWA HAD UNTIL 10 P.M.- THE TIME HE VIEWED THE VIDEOTAPE EXACTLY ONE WEEK PREVIOUS- TO FIND THE ANSWER TO ITS LETHAL RIDDLE.
SADAKO MUST STILL BE DOWN THERE ...
WHERE ARE YOU?
PLEASE COME OUT...

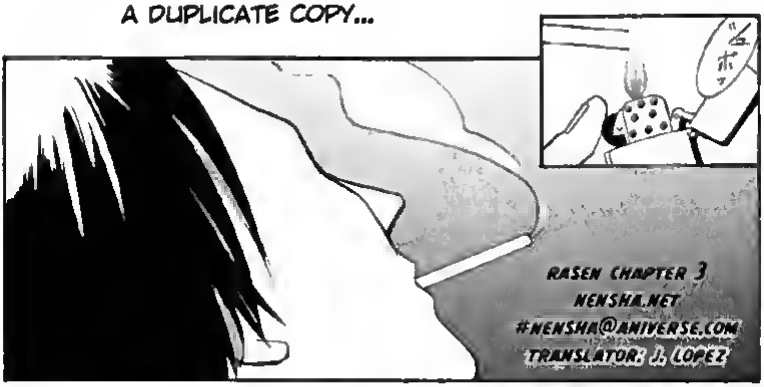
ASAKAWA! IT'S 10 MINUTES PAST 10!

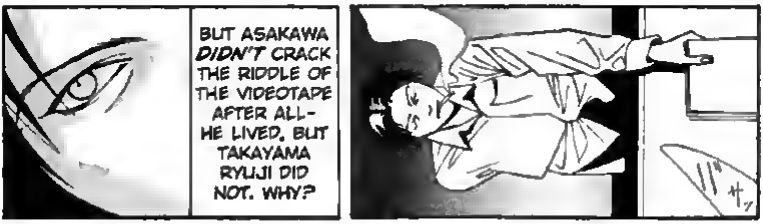
YOU GET SOME REST. I STILL HAVE A DEADLINE TO MAKE. MY THESIS IS DUE.
THE ONE WEEK TIME LIMIT HAD PASSED, AND ASAKAWA REMAINED UNHARMED. THE TWO CONCLUDED THAT THEY HAD IN FACT BROKEN THE VIDEO'S CURSE.
WE DID IT!
HOWEVER ...
ARE YOU SURE THAT RYUJI DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO YOU? ABOUT A VIDEOTAPE, FOR EXAMPLE?

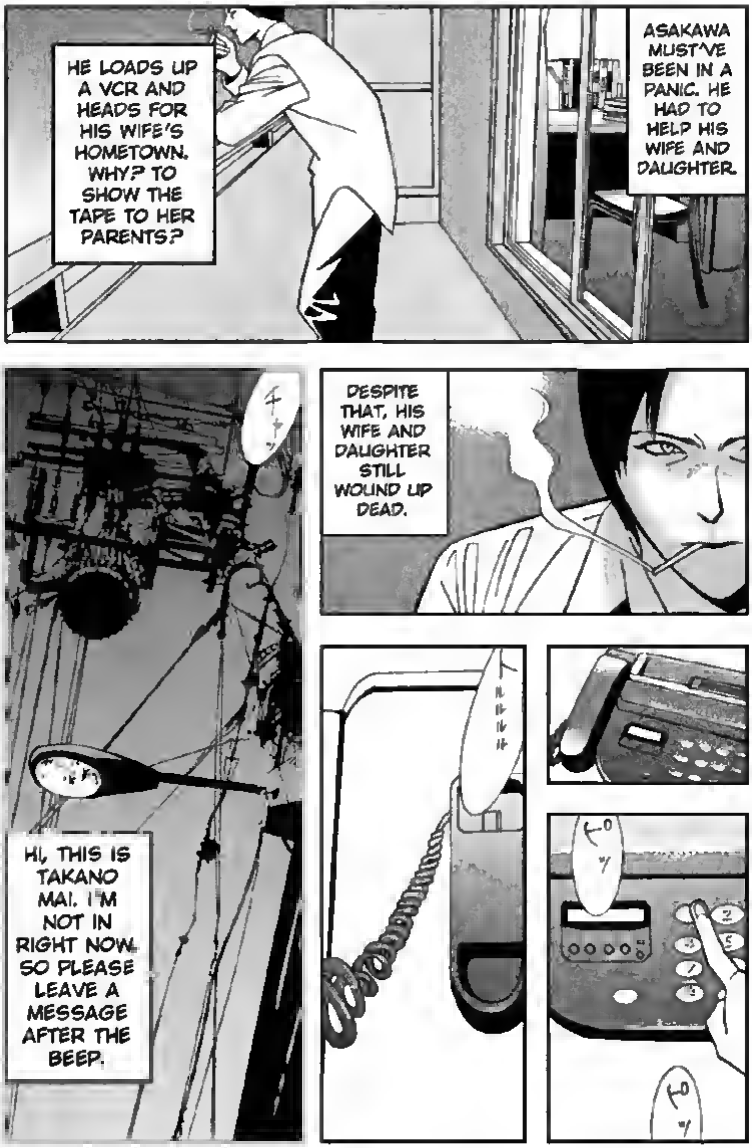

AARRGGH!
DOCTOR?
NO SIGN OF EXTERNAL INJURIES... "SUDDEN DEATH SYNDROME"?
WHY?!

BY THE FOLLOWING DAY, TAKAYAMA RYUJI WAS ALREADY DEAD.

SEPTEMBER 21. MONDAY.
SPECIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THE VIRUS: REPLICATION.
THE CURE: MAKE A DUPLICATE COPY OF THE TAPE.

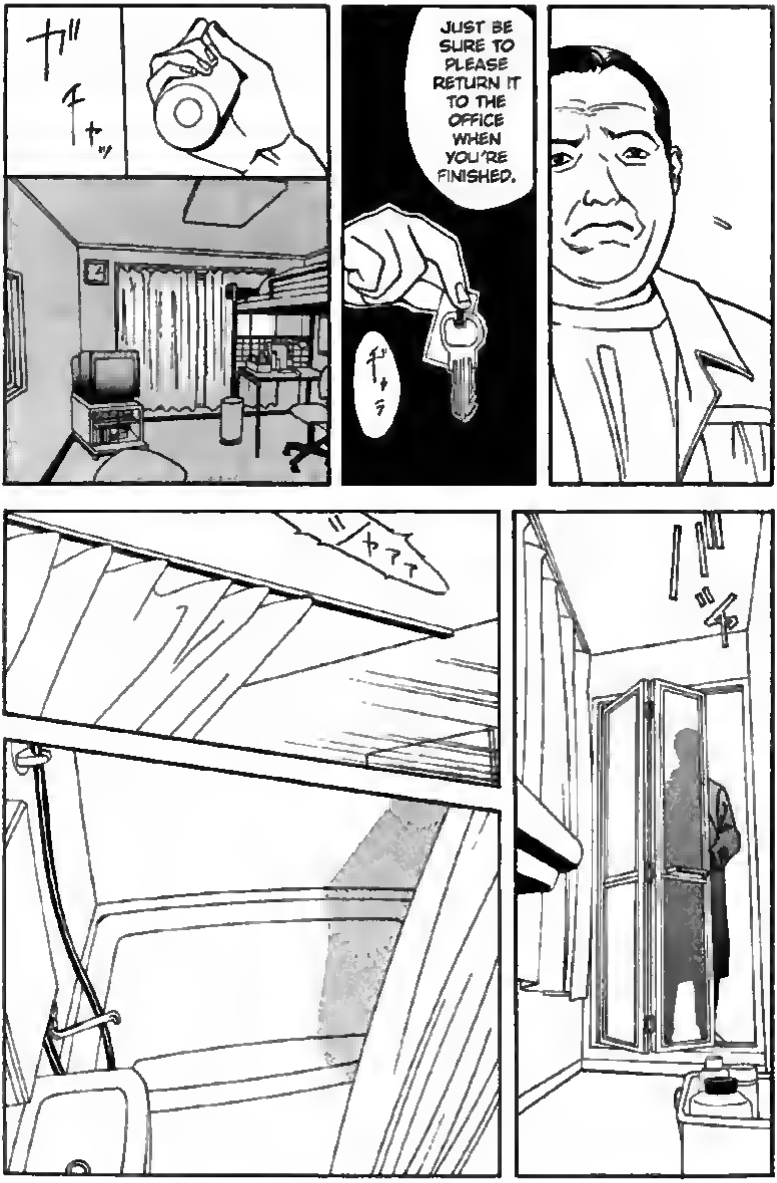





ASAKAWA MUST'VE BEEN IN A PANIC. HE HAD TO HELP HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER.
HE LOADS UP A VCR AND HEADS FOR HIS WIFE'S HOMETOWN. WHY? TO SHOW THE TAPE TO HER PARENTS?
DESPITE THAT, HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER STILL WOUND UP DEAD.
HI, THIS IS TAKANO MAI. I'M NOT IN RIGHT NOW. SO PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP.

HELLO. MY NAME IS ANDOU. I SPOKE WITH YOU YESTERDAY ON THE PHONE...
AAH, YES. MS. TAKANO'S FRIEND. PLEASE, WAIT JUST A MOMENT.

PLEASE.
IF YOU DON'T MIND, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT I'D LIKE TO CHECK FOR MYSELF. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BORROW A SPARE KEY?


JUST BE SURE TO PLEASE RETURN IT TO THE OFFICE WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED.

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NOTHING SEEMS OUT OF PLACE...
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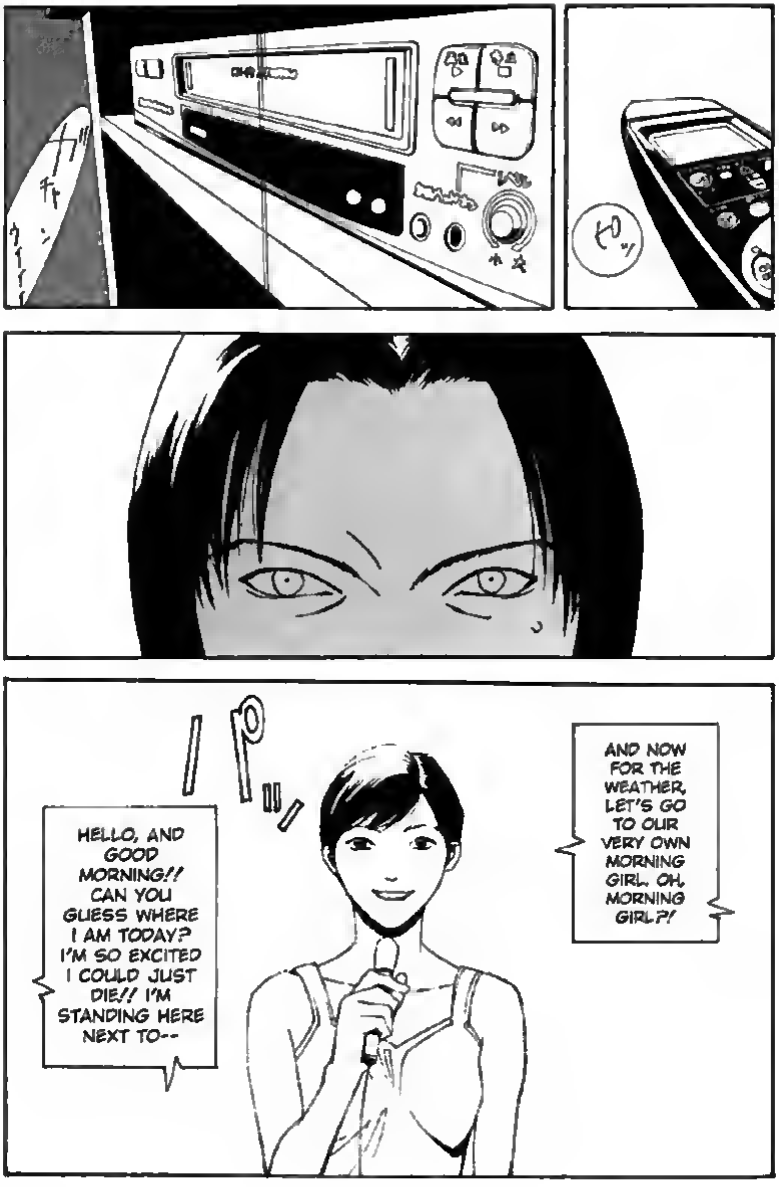
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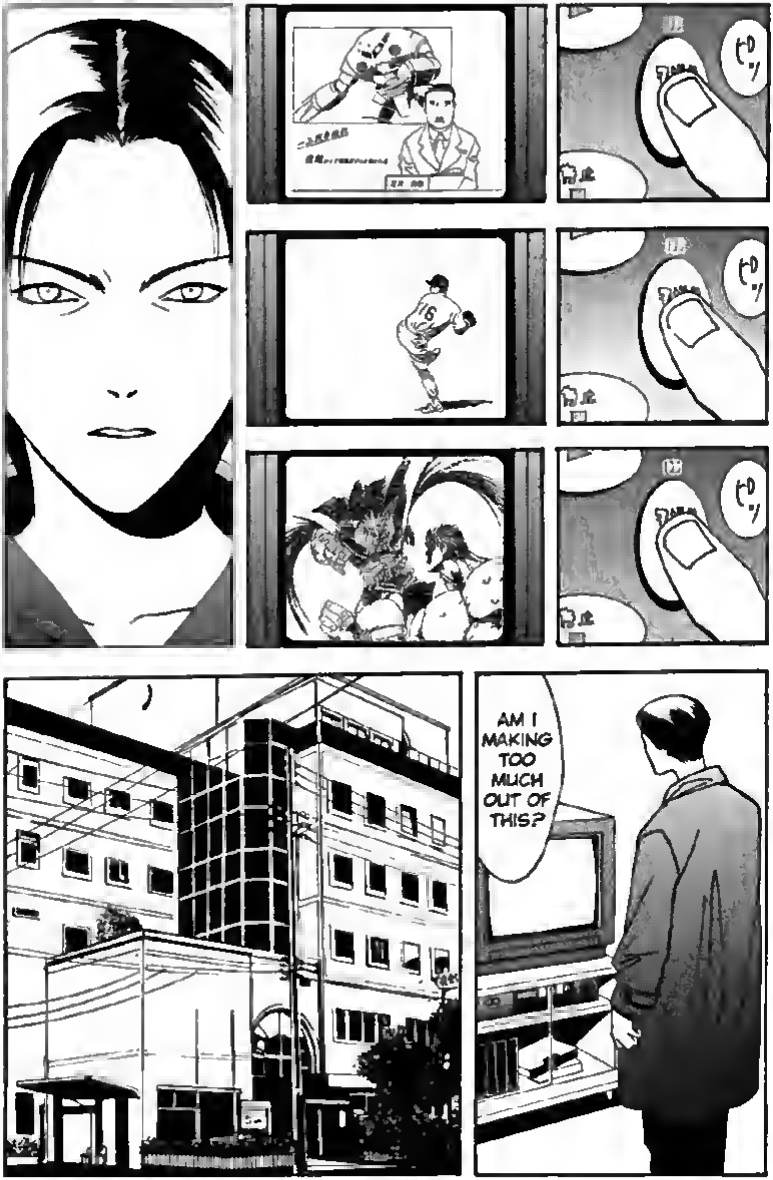
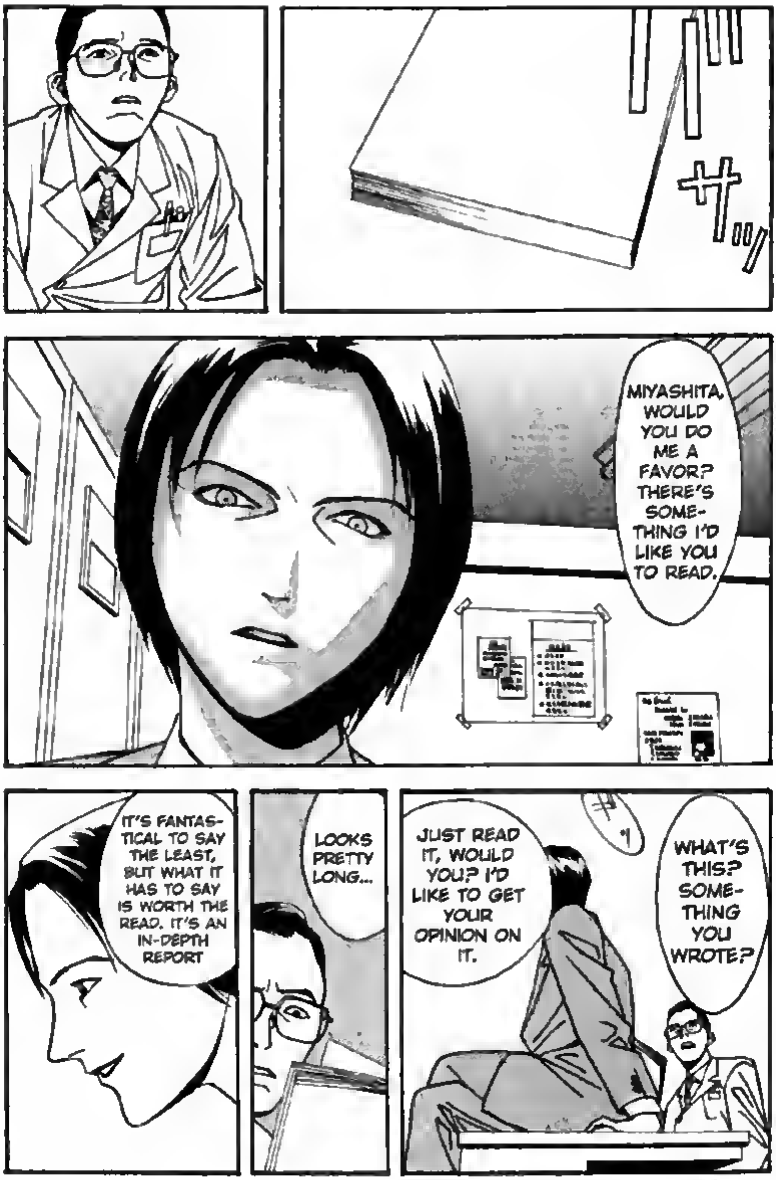
HELLO, AND GOOD MORNING!! CAN YOU GUESS WHERE I AM TODAY? I'M SO EXCITED I COULD JUST DIE!! I'M STANDING HERE NEXT TO--
AND NOW FOR THE WEATHER, LET'S GO TO OUR VERY OWN MORNING GIRL. OH, MORNING GIRL?!

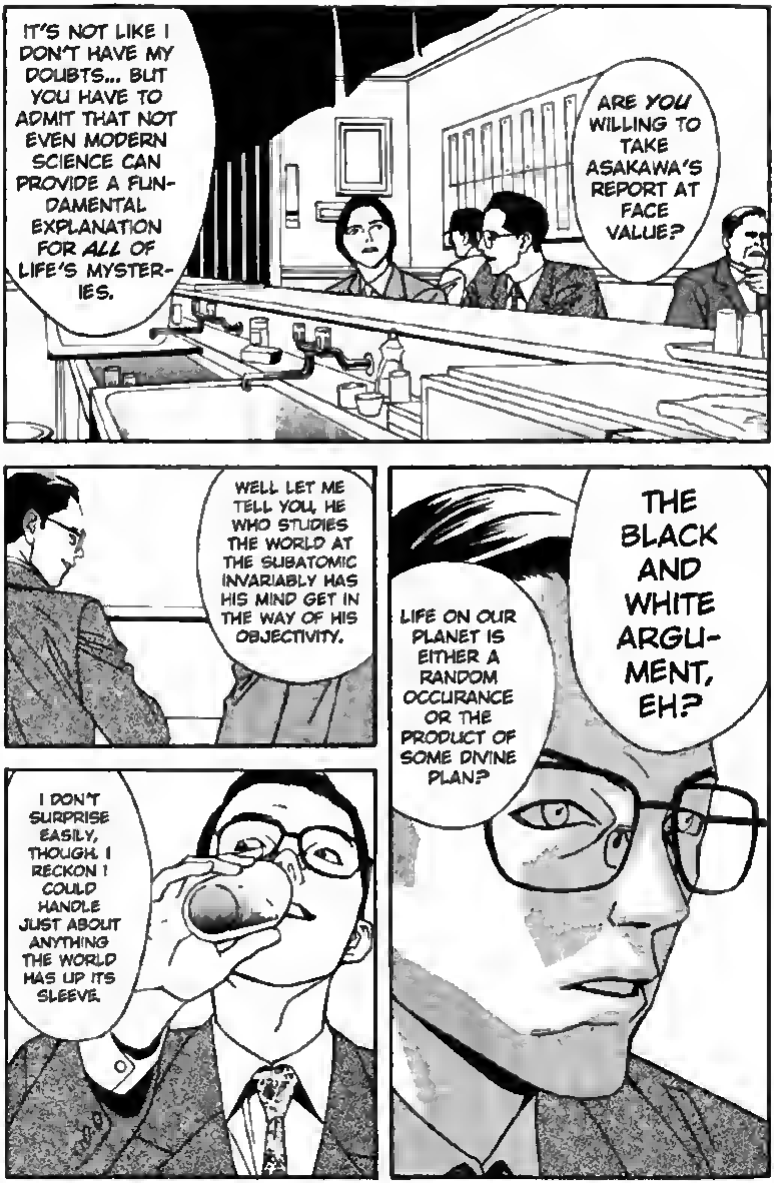

AM I MAKING TOO MUCH OUT OF THIS?


MIYASHITA, WOULD YOU DO ME A FAVOR? THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE YOU TO READ.
WHAT'S THIS? SOMETHING YOU WROTE?
JUST READ IT, WOULD YOU? I'D LIKE TO GET YOUR OPINION ON IT.
LOOKS PRETTY LONG...
IT'S FANTASTICAL TO SAY THE LEAST, BUT WHAT IT HAS TO SAY IS WORTH THE READ. IT'S AN IN-DEPTH REPORT

ASAKAWA? THE ASAKAWA WHOSE WIFE AND KID...
ON A STRING OF RECENT EVENTS-- WRITTEN BY ASAKAWA KAZUYUKI.
THE SAME.
TAKANO MAI'S GONE MISSING.
I'M COUNTING ON YOU, MIYASHITA. READ IT, AND LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.

TAKANO MAI...YOU MEAN TAKAYAMA RYUJI'S LOVER? THE FIRST ONE TO FIND HIS BODY?
I'VE CALLED THE UNIVERSITY, EVEN GOT IN TOUCH WITH SOME PEOPLE FROM HER HOME TOWN. NOTHING.
I WENT OUT TO HER APARTMENT YESTERDAY, SHE'S GOT DAYS WORTH OF MAIL JUST PILED UP IN HER MAILBOX.
I'M STARTING TO GET A REAL BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

ANDOU, WHY DON'T WE GO GRAB A DRINK? IT'S BEEN AWHILE SINCE WE'VE DONE ANYTHING.
WELL, I'LL TELL YOU, IT DEFINITELY THREW ME FOR A LOOP.
BUT DO YOU BELIEVE IT?
AND? WHAT DID YOU THINK?
I READ YOUR REPORT.
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU, ANDOU? WE'VE BOTH SEEN THE CORONER'S REPORTS, HEARD THEIR CONCLUSIONS ON THE CAUSE OF DEATH.
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER I BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IT CERTAINLY IS THOROUGH: ALL NAMES AND TIMES OF DEATH MENTIONED IN THE REPORT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE FACTS WE HAVE AT HAND.


IT'S NOT LIKE I DON'T HAVE MY DOUBTS... BUT YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THAT NOT EVEN MODERN SCIENCE CAN PROVIDE A FUNDAMENTAL EXPLANATION FOR *ALL* OF LIFE'S MYSTERIES.
ARE *YOU* WILLING TO TAKE ASAKAWA'S REPORT AT FACE VALUE?
WELL LET ME TELL YOU, HE WHO STUDIES THE WORLD AT THE SUBATOMIC INVARIABLY HAS HIS MIND GET IN THE WAY OF HIS OBJECTIVITY.
I DON'T SURPRISE EASILY, THOUGH. I RECKON I COULD HANDLE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING THE WORLD HAS UP ITS SLEEVE.
LIFE ON OUR PLANET IS EITHER A RANDOM OCCURANCE OR THE PRODUCT OF SOME DIVINE PLAN?
THE BLACK AND WHITE ARGUMENT, EH?

YES. THE DEATH OF ASAKAWA'S WIFE AND KID.
BAH! I MIGHT NOT HAVE EVER TOLD YOU THIS ANDOU, BUT I'M SOMETHING OF AN IDEALIST.
THAT'S A BIT EXTREME.
ALL RIGHT THEN MR. IDEALIST, TO GET BACK TO THE QUESTION, IS THERE ANYTHING IN THAT REPORT TO MAKE YOU THINK THAT IT'S NOT ON THE LEVEL?
I CAN'T GET MY HEAD AROUND IT: IF COPYING THE TAPE AND SHOWING TO SOMEONE ELSE IS REALLY WHAT BROKE THE CURSE, THEN WHY DID ASAKAWA'S WIFE AND KID STILL DIE? THE THREE OF THEM WENT BACK TO HIS WIFE'S HOMETOWN AND SHOWED THE VIDEO TO HER PARENTS, RIGHT? SO THAT SHOULD HAVE SAVED THEM, BUT IT DIDN'T. THE AUTPOSY SAID THAT THEY WERE DEAD EVEN BEFORE THE ACCIDENT. SOMETHING JUST DOESN'T ADD UP...
AAH. YOU TOO, HUH?

IT'S A DILEMMA, ALRIGHT.
IF THE VIDEO DOES EXIST, I'D DEFINITELY WANT TO SEE IT... BUT IF I *WERE* TO WATCH IT, THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT I WOULDN'T END UP DEAD MYSELF.
IT'S A DILEMMA.
WHAT'S THAT?
BUT I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT, ANDOU. I'D LOVE TO GET MY HANDS ON THAT TAPE.
A WEEK'S JUST NOT ENOUGH TIME TO FIGURE THIS THING OUT AND SAVE YOURSELF.
HOW ABOUT YOU? WOULD YOU WATCH IT?

NO THANKS. I'D RATHER NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE THAT RYUJI DID.

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